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WORD FROM THE EDITOR



And so another financial year passes — tempted not to think about tax or accounting for another 11 months? The budget for the upcoming year has been handed down and there's a tonne of incentives for small business owners. We'll run through them all and how you can take advantage.

Our annual Software and Apps feature always promises to be full of insight, as purchasing the right software for your business can be a bit of a moving feast. If you don't ask the right questions at the very start of the process, you run the risk of heading down the wrong path altogether. Read some of our in-depth articles on the subject to understand how to define your needs before you even get close to narrowing down the options. You'll likely save a bit of valuable time.

We live in a world of acronyms and buzzwords and sometimes the message gets lost in the noise. Service vehicles are defined by many: GVM, VCP, payload, kerb mass and more. What's it all mean? Decipher the doublespeak with the help of an article on how to determine the right service vehicle for your needs.

In Conversation is back and this time we are speaking with the founder of Service Today, a business dedicated to providing exactly what it says — service, today. We investigate how it delivers on that promise with the help of technology.

I hope you find this issue brimming with useful information and, as always, feel free to drop me a line at any time.

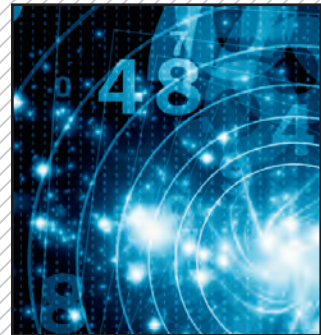
Kind regards,
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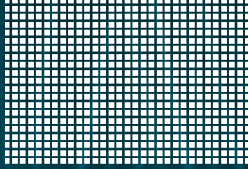
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FEATURE

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Dannielle Furness





Another financial year has come and gone and this year's federal Budget featured some significant breaks for small business, including tax cuts and red-tape reduction. Don't wait till next year to investigate what it means for your business and how you can reap the rewards.

For some, the start of the new financial year means getting back to business and putting thoughts of taxation, deductions and audits on the backburner till next year. As tempting as that may be, there are enough incentives in the pipeline to make it worthwhile staying focused on finances and planning for a little while longer.

From little things, big things grow

It seems the government learned a valuable lesson from the rather cool reception of last year's effort and made the Jobs and Small Business package the key selling point for the 2015-16 federal Budget. The heart of the message was the introduction of measures designed to facilitate growth in job numbers and to support small business, which the current government views as the 'engine room' of Australia's economy. From little things, big things grow, after all.

Despite the constant doom and gloom being reported in the media, we are living in a time of record low interest rates, decreasing fuel and electricity prices, and a lower exchange rate, all of which signal a favourable time to invest in growth and jobs. To encourage that development, businesses with an annual turnover of less than \$2 million have been treated to tax cuts effective 1 July 2015: a 1.5% reduction for companies, which brings the new company tax rate down to 28.5%, and a 5% reduction for non-companies, capped at \$1000 per annum.

Perhaps the most publicised incentive is the change to asset deductions, which initially

had people dreaming of new flatscreens, so further explanation was warranted. Any eligible asset valued below \$20,000 that is purchased between 7.30 pm on 12 May 2015 and 30 June 2017 will qualify for immediate depreciation in the financial year in which the asset is first used or installed. The key word in that sentence is "eligible". Although it's only a temporary measure, this represents a significant change from the previous threshold of \$1000. Of course, there are a couple of exclusions to the new depreciation rules, including in-house software allocated to a software development pool.

On the fringe

Fringe benefit tax (FBT) has been the bugbear of employers and employees alike since it was introduced in the mid-1980s. It was effectively seen as the death knell for many work-related perks, including long client lunches and other types of entertainment, and is a headache to manage in terms of its application. The tentacles of FBT reach beyond entertainment and the process of delineation has become increasingly convoluted, particularly in the realm of issuing portable electronic devices to employees.

Under current legislation, an employer who provides an employee with a laptop and a tablet for work-related use may only claim an FBT exemption on one device, because both devices have substantially identical functions. "Functionality" is the definer in terms of tax application and even the Australian Tax Office (ATO) admits this is confusing. The good news is that (provided legislation passes) from 1 April 2016 businesses with a turnover of less than \$2m will be entitled to an

FEATURE



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exemption on multiple items, even where the function of those devices is similar. Sanity prevails.

Gain in one hand...

Capital Gains Tax (CGT) is on the radar as well. Under the current system, changes to a business structure will generally trigger a CGT liability and the only existing exemption is when an individual incorporates.

Moving forward, changes to the legal structure of a company (provided turnover is less than \$2m) will not incur CGT. This is being referred to as “rollover relief” and, importantly, it represents a recognition that small businesses may initially choose a legal structure that does not suit the needs of an entity as it grows. Removing the tax burden associated with rectifying that problem is an encouragement to business continuance and subsequent investment.

...lose in the other

Changes to CGT won't come in to effect till the 2016-17 financial year, so don't plan any major business structure remodelling between now and then, unless you particularly relish paying extra taxes.

Hire, hire, hire

The first half of the year has been a bit of a rollercoaster for national employment figures, but the government is encourag-

ing small business to increase employee numbers via a range of programs. From November 2015, employers will have access to more flexible payment arrangements under the Restart, Youth and Long Term Unemployed wage subsidies and, starting January next year, government support for employers hiring older workers and unemployed job seekers will also increase.

Supervise super

This one has been in play for a while, but may have slipped through the cracks for some employers. If you pay your contractors under a contract that is wholly or principally for labour, you must pay superannuation contributions on their behalf, even if that contractor quotes an Australian business number (ABN).

Generally, a contract is principally for labour if more than half of the value of the contract is for the person's labour, which may include physical, mental or artistic labour. For the purposes of the superannuation guarantee scheme, the



Don't plan on any major business structure remodelling

contractors in this scenario are your employees. It does not include contractors hired through a third party, such as labour-hire companies.

If in doubt, refer to the ATO website, which features tools and calculators to help you determine your legal responsibility.

Nothing is set in stone

Of course, the problem with any budget-related initiatives and changes in legislation is that they are rarely set in stone. Australian politics has been fairly volatile in the last decade or so. Since 2007, we've moved from a Coalition government to Labor, through a leadership change and subsequent minority (Labor) government, followed by another leadership change and then a return to the Coalition. Along the way, various policies and departments have been created, undone and reformed.

Based on historical evidence, it's entirely conceivable that some (or all) of the promised incentives on the table may not live to see the light of day, depending on which way the political wind blows. Even so, it never hurts to be aware and ready to take advantage when the day arrives, so do your homework, seek professional advice for your specific situation and don't leave all the accounting till the end of the financial year.



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HITTING THE ERP JACKPOT

For more than half a century the Ainsworth name has been synonymous with the gaming industry. In 1995, Len Ainsworth founded the company with a commitment to become the leading manufacturer and supplier of gaming solutions in Australia and around the world.

With its fully integrated approach to operations that includes design, development, assembly testing, sales and field service, Ainsworth encompasses the entire product development cycles for its products — from conception through to installation, service and support.



© Tomasz Zajda/Dollar Photo Club

When the company began to research how they could use technology to step up their ERP processes and stay ahead of the game, Pronto's experience in the industry made them a logical choice.

Ainsworth General Manager Manufacturing Ian Cooper has been a long-time user of Pronto, having overseen the implementation of Pronto at three other organisations.

After hearing about Pronto Software making waves in the gaming industry, Ainsworth decided it was time to review its ERP processes and explore ways it could use Pronto Xi.

"When someone has a secret weapon like Pronto, word spreads around the industry pretty fast," said Cooper.

The gaming industry is unique with rules that vary from country to country and even state to state. So it's not surprising that at the top of Ainsworth's ERP checklist was the ability for the solution to be configured to take into account these geographical business issues.

"We needed a solution that would meet strict compliance requirements of the different Australian states we operate in. Each machine must be manufactured in accordance with that state's regulations," said Cooper.

"Pronto excels in core technology that can support manufacturing requirements. It's designed to match with specific needs of a business like ours. When we have a request for a customised product, Pronto is always receptive to help us make this happen. They help us build functionality to automate manufacturing processes so we can save time and money. Importantly, this allows us to divert resources to growth strategies," he said.

The cost of technology also played a role in the decision to implement a Pronto solution over other solutions.

"Even when you look at all the possible alternatives in the marketplace, I still believe Pronto is the most cost-effective solution in Australia," added Cooper.

With an established legacy in the Australian market, Ainsworth had a vision to open an offshoot in Las Vegas and needed an ERP system equipped to support the process.

"Pronto has become a central part of our business, with users spanning all areas including service, sales, administration, manufacturing, finance and technical compliance. So when we

focused our attention on the North American expansion, it was an easy decision which system would run our Las Vegas operation.

"It's great to have one integrated system working well across all our sites and markets. Our Las Vegas operation flourished within a very short time," he said. "We can seamlessly communicate and report across all sites both in Australia and North America, which is a huge bonus."

In the year ahead, Ainsworth is looking to upgrade its solution to include Pronto's Business Intelligence platform.

"This is something we are exploring for 2013. Pronto's integration with IBM Cognos 10 will deliver significant changes in data intelligence and improve the way we manage reporting. A move to a Pronto BI solution will unlock new opportunities for the business. I've been in the industry a long time and I've never seen anything like it; it's phenomenal what Pronto can do. The moment we had one integrated system across all sites and markets, we hit the jackpot."

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BUSINESS IN THE AGE OF BYOD

Between increasing operational cost, staff turnover, budget constraints and pressure to deliver products and services faster, today's field service managers need to act on opportunities quickly.

It's no secret businesses need to regularly reinvent themselves to remain competitive and manage their profitability. So how can you increase the bottom line with limited funding to invest? What can you do to increase productivity or reduce operational costs? A simple and cost-effective approach is to rethink business processes regarding data collection and paperwork, as real-time operational updates mean better management and improved productivity and profitability.

The business challenge

Traditional business processes in many industries still rely on paper-based forms for scheduling work, assigning jobs and inventory control, and ultimately to deliver

products or services. A good deal of work is required to generate this information, manage it and distribute it.

The time to perform the operations, get signatures (where required) and key the completed information into the business system is costly and unnecessary, given the available and affordable technologies.

Old practices include:

- Manual processes for paperwork
- Time to complete billing, information updates, etc
- Timing of information to initiate billing
- Time correcting inventory levels
- Dispatching jobs to a mobile workforce

There are other costs:

- Paper-based client files, lookup and handling time
- Courier and postage costs
- Rekeying data in some cases
- Costs of forms and paper

Whether it is field service, shop floor or warehouse, the process of filling out paperwork and delivering that paperwork to be keyed into a business system has become an unnecessary and time-costing step. Why not drive the data directly from the end point where the work is being conducted directly into your business system? Why not push the new or revised data back out to staff working on the coal face? Why wait?



is likely to be more and a step backwards relative to your competitors and your ever-rising operational costs.

An IBM study determined that a select group of mobile-savvy enterprises are prioritising mobile technology and making it a strategic IT imperative.

What's more, the study finds that these 'mobile first' organisations are:

- Two times more likely than other organisation to grow revenue by 10% or more a year.
- Four times more likely than others to benefit from increased customer interactions.
- Enjoying higher rates of employee responsiveness and productivity.
- Gaining strong returns on their mobility investments.
- Dramatically improving both customer service and customer satisfaction.

Since it is common practice for organisations to allow employees to use their smartphones to access their corporate email, why wouldn't they allow these same employees to provide job or activity data on that same device? Employees are generally keen to use their own devices and if it makes their work easier, it becomes a welcome bonus to them.

Employee productivity

Effectively, real-time information from your mobile staff provides you with exact, up-to-the-minute information on what the business is doing. Providing real-time updates helps them from having to go to a computer to look it up or to stop at the office to retrieve the necessary paperwork. There is a real time-savings here as well as the business processing of their work.

Employee satisfaction

Implementing a bring your own device (BYOD) approach has many benefits for employees:

- They are not carrying a second device.
- They are familiar with its use and will not need training.
- They are likely to be happy with their device.
- The up-front capital costs to implement

your mobile business plan are effectively eliminated.

- It is convenient for them to integrate their personal and work lives.
- You can implement solutions today.

Security

If BYOD is implemented it can be challenging to secure the end point (devices) themselves given the number of types you may encounter. You must secure gateways and access points. Encryption is essential as is control over remote wiping of any corporate business data in the event of loss or theft. Any world-class mobile solution will support these functions. Lastly, consider implementing a mobile device management system (MDM) as part of your mobility strategy.

Costs

There are many approaches to implementing mobile solutions. There are specialty apps that cater for SAP, Oracle and other enterprise ERP systems which are typically expensive and require a good deal of planning to implement. That could mean you have to wait until next fiscal year to budget for these solutions.

Most organisations don't have excess IT budget to implement new solutions in their current budget year. Consider a solution that is offered as a service rather than a licence. Consider starting small and expanding only when the solution is proven. You don't have to create a big bang implementation trying to solve all problems. A savvy approach would be to implement a simple solution for one of your processes and evaluate its effectiveness. Focus on a team of individuals who are keen to prove the changes. Learn from the process and grow the solutions to incorporate additional processes.

Let's face it, the mobile era is here, whether its BYOD or employer-provided devices. Business process improvements can be implemented securely and with minimum cost and effort.

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The standard practice of starting jobs and the paper-based flow and the delays related to distributing paper-based work orders, filling them out, returning the completed versions and realising that ultimately they have to be keyed into a business system means time wasted.

A simple and cost-effective approach

Let's be clear, you can't just replace legacy systems. Continued support may be costly; however, the capital costs and time to replace them can be even greater. There are cost-effective approaches to improving your business processes that can be realised quickly and integrated with your existing legacy systems. The cost of doing nothing

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DELIVERING ON A PROMISE



Field Service Business editor Dannielle Furness spoke with Zak Saboune, Founder and General Manager of Service Today.

Field Service Business: Tell me a bit about Service Today and what the company offers.

Zak Saboune: Service Today is a home services company. We provide plumbing and electrical services, along with heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) maintenance to residential and commercial customers. The company's head office is located in Sydney but we also operate in Melbourne and Adelaide, where we also have offices, and throughout Wollongong and the NSW Central Coast. We've got over 70 trucks on the road, spread across those regions.

FSB: What are the biggest challenges in running a team of that size across that many regions?

ZS: Our company name is also our brand promise. Our customers literally need service today. That means we need to be incredibly efficient in the way we run the business, including the way we handle our scheduling and logistics, as well as things like ensuring the ongoing maintenance of our fleet. Lost time is obviously costly, as is anything that prevents us from delivering on our service promise to customers, so keeping things moving is the key objective.

FSB: What has the company implemented to help meet some of those challenges?

ZS: We simply couldn't do what we do without leveraging the right tech-

nology. To operate smoothly, you need to have complete visibility of your fleet and your team. You need to understand the status of current jobs, as well as where every member of the team is at all times. To that end, the days of manual scheduling are well and truly behind us and have been for quite a while. I don't know how anyone could operate that way anymore and still effectively meet the needs of their customers.

FSB: Can you expand on that a little — specifically, what type of technology is helping you achieve your goals and how?

ZS: It's all about providing the best possible customer service, so we've opted for solutions that will give us improvement across the board. A vehicle-tracking system (we use Navman Wireless) provides benefits in a number of ways. For example, the ability to see in real time where all of our vehicles are means that we can ensure that the nearest technician with the most relevant skills can be dispatched to a job. That's pretty obvious, but it's more than that. That same visibility gives us clear insight into driver behaviour. Not only are we concerned with providing a safe environment for our mobile team but, with a large number of vehicles to maintain, it's extremely important that our vehicles are being driven with a focus on safety and efficiency. Because the vehicles need regular maintenance, we utilise an in-built reminder system that automatically generates and sends an email when it's time for a vehicle service, based on kilometres driven. The system not only alerts fleet managers, but also

raises a purchase order and sends an email to our nominated mechanic, meaning he can schedule workshop time effectively. So it really improves our supplier relationships as well.

FSB: Presumably this all impacts on the efficiency of the back-office team?

ZS: Undoubtedly. It's certainly made the lives of our state-based dispatchers easier. Although, when you start to look at ways to improve your business and investigate specific technologies, it's initially not apparent just how far those improvements will extend. First and foremost, we wanted to track our vehicles with the objective of servicing customers quickly. It's been an unexpected bonus to see the effectiveness of other operations boosted. All of this new technology comes with an extensive reporting capability; so you can cross-reference to verify timesheets, which helps with invoicing and rostering as well keeping an eye on personal vehicle use. It's not about policing as much as it is about streamlining. Anything that helps me grow my business is welcome.

FSB: What sort of improvements will you be looking at in the future?

ZS: I'm keen for more integration and anything that simplifies our internal processes. If it makes the business run more smoothly, then it affords us the time and capacity to grow. Who doesn't want that?

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ON-TIME DELIVERY

Australia Post has been paving the way for over two centuries as Australia's most respected and recognised postal service provider. The company's ability to identify opportunities and react appropriately to maintain market position was never more evident than through its acquisition of national road freight company StarTrack in the second half of 2012.

Seen as an avenue to add significant additional capability, particularly in the area of express and tracked parcel services, the acquisition of StarTrack allowed Australia Post to effectively deal with the increased need for package delivery generated by the 11 million online purchases made by Australian consumers each year. The next step in the evolution was to deliver a new era for parcel delivery via the introduction of mobile business hubs, a venture previously unexplored in the postal service sector.

Australia Post had no available blueprint from which to work when developing the mobile business hubs, so it sought professional assistance to tackle the challenge and

turned to vehicle fit-out experts VQuip to help develop a framework for development of the concept.

With years of experience in the vehicle customisation industry, VQuip was ready to tackle the challenges of this unique project head-on and to provide the expert advice and in-depth knowledge needed to make the concept a reality. The requirement for the project was to serve two distinct purposes: firstly to strengthen Australia Post's position as a local service provider by providing a mobile 'trade stand' for direct connection with customers; and secondly, to generate brand awareness by highlighting the business hub network, which would help to grow revenue in local catchments right across Australia.

The project time frame was particularly tight, with only six weeks between initial drawings through to the final rollout of completed product, so it was essential that the mobile hub vehicles specification adequately matched the criteria identified by both Australia Post and StarTrack at the design stage.

As the mobile hubs would almost double in footprint size when set up, each van had to be sturdy yet lightweight in its design, possessing an interior structure that would support the excess weight while allowing for enough room to provide easy access loading and unloading of each vehicle. These elements included banners, popcounters, additional seating and weather protection capability including pull-out awnings and pop-up marquees.

The design discovery journey entailed having a clear understanding of the customer's needs, before commencing the design process. The design team ensured that Australia Post and StarTrack's vision was translated into reality and potential risks were identified and strategically overcome via a risk management procedure (RMP), a standard part of the design practice.

In addition to the physical considerations, the electronic system that supports the fleet of mobile hubs was also very complex in nature. Each van needed to sustain a diverse range of electrical equipment including iPads, EFTPOS systems, printers, screens and safes; and ensure that all customer requirements could be quickly and effectively attended to on the spot, no matter what the location.

VQuip provided the vehicles for launch across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland in late 2014, giving Australia Post and StarTrack a unique vehicle design to drive innovation in the parcel delivery segment, facilitating the move into additional markets in the face of traditional letter delivery downturn.

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THE GVM CONUNDRUM

When looking at service vehicle choices, there's more to consider than gross vehicle mass alone.

The gross vehicle mass of the average light utility has increased substantially over the last 10 or 15 years. For instance, a 1998 Toyota Hilux had a GVM of 2730 kg, versus 2835 kg in the 2014 offering. Without more information, an unsuspecting customer may think that equates to a higher payload capability, but this is far from the truth. In reality, the '98 Hilux featured a 1341 kg payload and the later model just 1155 kg. There's obviously more to consider than GVM alone, so let's break it down.

Calculating payload

In order to correctly establish utility requirements prior to initial purchase, buyers should calculate payload to ensure ultimate operation of the vehicle within safe limits.

Correct chassis selection will ensure the long life of the vehicle, sensible fuel economy and good handling. To assist in payload calculation, we've provided the following guide on common terminology, along with some calculation examples.

Gross vehicle mass (GVM)

GVM is measured in kilograms and displayed on the vehicle compliance plate (usually found under the bonnet on the firewall) as well as vehicle specification sheets. The GVM is the maximum permissible weight of a fully loaded vehicle including the vehicle itself, the driver and passengers, accessories, options and any type of truck body.

Kerb mass (KM)

KM is the mass, or weight, in kilograms of

the vehicle as a cab chassis with no driver, passengers, payload or truck body. The KM of utilities varies from model to model.

Payload (P)

Payload is the mass, or weight, of cargo/goods/tools and people that the vehicle is permitted to carry.

Occupants

Every person in a light truck is considered an occupant and is assumed to weigh 75 kg. The total number of occupants for any truck is shown on the vehicle compliance plate and usually on the vehicle specification sheet.

Vehicle compliance plate (VCP)

The VCP is an aluminium plate affixed to the firewall that shows the make and model of



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Reducing unnecessary weight allows the payload to be used for priority equipment.

the vehicle, the GVM and the recommended number of occupants.

Tare

Tare is not the same as kerb mass and should not be used for these calculations.

Calculating payload (P)

Payload (P) in kilograms is the GVM minus the following items: KM; weight of the occupants; weight of fuel, oil and water; weight of any fitted options (towbar, bull bar, etc); and the weight of the truck body.

Presented as an equation, $P = GVM - (KM + \text{fluids} + \text{occupants} + \text{options} + \text{truck body/tray})$.

Managing inventory

Payload is a variable dictated by the ability

to manage inventory and organisation is the key. Removing tools and equipment from a vehicle that aren't required on a day-to-day basis will reduce excess weight. Rationalising consumable inventory eg, swapping a 40-litre drum of oil for a 20-litre drum or carrying two tubes of silicone instead of a carton will save a few more kilos.

Reducing unnecessary weight allows the payload to be used for priority equipment. Revising your equipment inventory on a regular basis would ensure you have sufficient stock and the right tools each time your vehicle arrives on-site.

The consequences of exceeding GVM

Exceeding the GVM of a vehicle leads to a number of issues:

- **Increased running and maintenance costs:** The vehicle is working harder and under excess strain in terms of suspension and brakes.
 - **Poor handling:** Less control of steering and braking makes driving more difficult. In turn, this leads to compromised safety for the driver, passengers, other vehicles and pedestrians.
 - **Warranty:** In the event of an accident, warranty can become null and void if the vehicle has exceeded the GVM capacity as specified by the manufacturer.
 - **Liability:** At best, an overloaded vehicle can incur a hefty fine. At worst, a vehicle involved in an accident occasioning injury or death can lead to devastating outcomes including gaol sentences for responsible parties.
- Duty of care considerations mean others in the chain have a shared participation in any negligent behaviours, which is a sobering reminder for fleet managers and operators when determining the ideal vehicle choice for service teams.

Spreading the payload

It's not uncommon to see a ute so overloaded at the rear of the tray that the front wheels are almost off the road. This means all of the payload weight is on or behind the rear axle, creating an unbalanced vehicle, which will render the steering light and ineffective, contributing to a more hazardous driving environment.

Heavier load items should ideally be positioned nearer to the vehicle cab, between the front and rear axles, resulting in a more even load spread and safer driving experience.

Too little payload capacity for the job?

If the required GVM can't be effectively handled by a light utility, what is a fleet manager to do? Essentially, there are three choices: continue as is, overload the vehicle and hope nothing goes wrong; supplement the fleet with additional light utilities to carry the excess gear; or, upgrade to a medium truck that can carry a larger payload without compromise.

The upside of option number three is that service bodies and canopies can be fitted to standardise the load and create protocol for the carrying of additional payload weight.

While the one-tonne ute is a popular choice for field service teams, the heavy loads, tools and equipment frequently needed for a 'workshop on wheels' mean that a larger service body is often a better choice. Interior fittings can be developed to hold specific tools and equipment and to allow for the weight of those items in the payload distribution.

With so much at stake, it's clear that GVM alone is not a sufficient indicator of vehicle suitability and that required functionality and load capability should be carefully considered before making a choice.

XL Service Bodies Pty Ltd
www.xl.com.au

IN-VEHICLE FLEET TRACKING AND MESSAGING

Navman Wireless Australia has announced the availability of its next-generation in-vehicle fleet tracking, navigation and two-way messaging device, the M-Nav 950. Features include truck-specific warnings and landmark navigation, on-screen signature capture and free lifetime updates.

The 6", Garmin-supported in-vehicle display fully integrates with the Navman Wireless OnlineAVL2 platform. The device works with the in-vehicle tracking unit connecting with the Telstra Mobile Network or Iridium satellite communication network to the back office.



Along with the hardware, Navman Wireless launches Drive, a comprehensive suite of applications built to enhance driver efficiency, productivity and safety. Drive comes pre-installed on the M-Nav 950 and combines fleet management, communication, navigation, dispatching and documentation systems into one user-friendly driver interface, streamlining processes for drivers, dispatchers and the fleet. Its focus

on driver and operational efficiency paves the way for automated tasks, safer roads and smoother communication.

The M-Nav 950 is designed to boost efficiency for drivers on the road as well as managers in the back office, making it a multifunctional tool that can serve as part of a business's fleet management solution.

The latest in navigation and routing tools allow drivers to seamlessly map job locations or other key landmarks from an interactive map screen. Managers can send routing information and updates directly to a driver using the Navman Wireless OnlineAVL2 GPS fleet tracking software platform.

Two-way messaging keeps drivers connected and their managers updated, reducing dependency on email, texts and lengthy phone calls. All driver communication is managed via one user-friendly interface, directly from the inside of the vehicle. Using OnlineAVL2, fleet managers can create and customise digital forms and send them as messages to the driver. Drivers can collect customer signatures, order details, access invoicing and more, eliminating paperwork and time-consuming workflows.

The Signature Capture tool is readily available with the Forms messaging option and uses capacitive touch, enabling fast and easy signature capture and delivery confirmations right from the field.

Through connecting a Data Capture Unit, Drive's Engine Monitoring System (EMS) feature allows drivers to see engine parameters on their in-vehicle displays, such as speed, RPM, temperature, fuel and oil pressure.

Trucking Attributes helps commercial drivers find the safest routes, avoiding narrow roads, low underpasses and weight- and load-type-restricted bridges while discovering trucking points of interest.

Navman Wireless Australia
www.navmanwireless.com.au

ERP SOFTWARE

Greentree International has released Greentree4, a next-generation fully integrated ERP software platform.

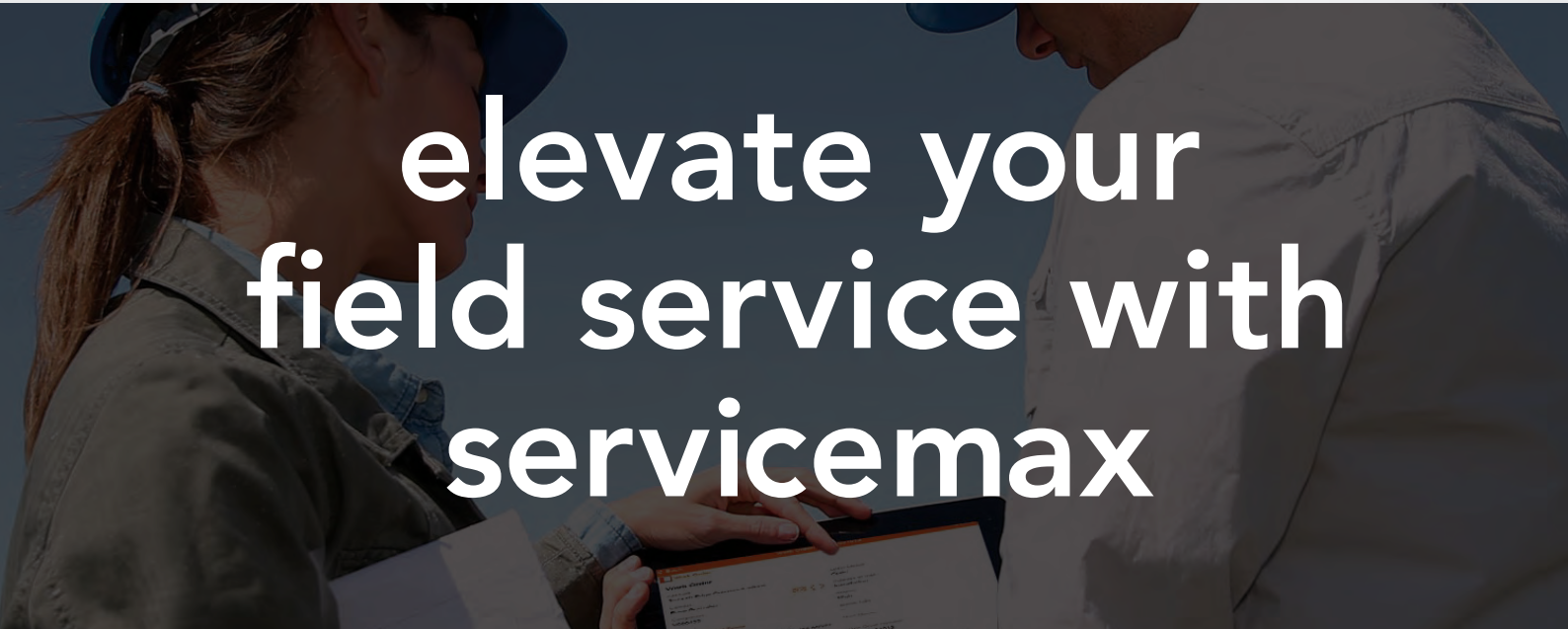
Greentree4 is based on the 'work it your way philosophy', which streamlines the configuration and design of screens and forms so that they can be customised at an organisational, group or individual level with no special training.

Greentree4 has all the functionality and credibility that is currently delivered in a Windows environment, sitting seamlessly alongside new browser-based capabilities supporting high-resolution graphics, touch frameworks, pluggable applets (eg, Google Maps), multimedia and more.

Anyone with a good understanding of their organisation and work processes and a working knowledge of Greentree will be able to use Greentree4's design-it-yourself technology - tailoring screens and forms to work exactly as required, as well as changing colours, terminology and layout.

Greentree4 can be run in the cloud, on-premise or a combination of both. The platform mix across JADE and HTML5 is environment and device agnostic, providing greater flexibility and futureproofing.

Greentree International
www.greentree.com



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*Gartner "Magic Quadrant for Field Service Management" by William McNeill, Michael Maoz, Jason Wong, December 22, 2014.

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DIGITAL DISRUPTION

Many devices and technologies we take for granted were once considered disruptive, but now they are part of everyday use.

Disruptive innovations are those technological advances that fundamentally change a market or industry, often by displacing an existing technology.

While often met with initial resistance, such technologies should be seen as transformative rather than destructive as they often increase productivity, resulting in countless benefits and paving the way for further innovation. As technology advances, routine tasks are made more efficient, freeing up more resources to direct towards other efforts and further progress.

In the recent past, wireless technology fundamentally changed the nature of communications, and over the last century, machines have continued to replace people. For instance, sewer inspections are

frequently completed using CCTV, reducing the need for workers to venture directly into the system. Advances in renewables like solar PV and energy storage seem poised to transform the electricity industry.

In the information age, as industry becomes more data intensive, many disruptive technologies take a digital form. In the report titled 'Digital Disruption - Short fuse, big bang?', consultancy firm Deloitte suggests that many of the largest Australian companies face a huge shake-up from emerging digital technologies within the next three years. Digital disruption is driving the next wave of technological evolution and the utility sector is no exception.

Shaking up the utility locating sector

One of many fields to have experienced innovation is that of utility locating technology. Understanding underground assets

remains vital for utilities and construction contractors as more and more assets are located underground.

In the past we have seen a move away from manual records and from more destructive methods of determining asset locations, such as exploratory digging or potholing. Non-invasive surveying technologies like ground penetrating radar (GPR), sounding technology, radio detection and electromagnetic induction have experienced widespread adoption. Services like Dial Before You Dig (DBYD), which collate information submitted by contractors and offer it freely, also play a pivotal role.

The next phase in the field's development looks likely to involve augmented reality overlays on mobile devices, which use GIS data to visualise underground assets. Solutions that display geographic asset data as maps, text or as a 3D visualisa-



Advances in mobile technology improve efficiencies, are often more cost effective and reduce physical waste.

An industry opportunity

The benefits to utilities that adopt these new technologies are manifold. Knowledge-rich employees who have stayed with a company for decades are now reaching retirement age and the newer workers only stay in the same position for an average of four to five years. Forecasts predict that this trend will become even more pronounced, with the next generation of workers switching positions every few years.

In high-turnover conditions, staff don't have years to understand the intricacies of every task as they once did, so user-friendly utility location technologies with intuitive interfaces may be increasingly vital in making sure workers are equipped with the information they need.

This is especially relevant for utility location given the drastic consequences of inadequate knowledge regarding the location of buried services. Hitting live underground assets can cause disruptions to important services, huge financial costs, injuries and even the loss of lives.

Most utilities cite the safety of workers and the public as one of their foremost priorities. Unintentionally disrupting underground assets during excavation can result in dangerous explosions and fire, causing injuries or fatalities.

Even contact with less dangerous assets can cause substantial damage and add up to significant financial costs and reduced productivity. In a submission to the Productivity Commission's enquiry into Australia's infrastructure, DBYD revealed that the inadequate recording of underground asset locations, much of which occurred during the construction of the NBN, resulted in 15,900 incidents of damage to telecommunications assets alone in the 3.25 years up to 2012. The NBN is the largest single infrastructure upgrade ever undertaken in the country and failure to notify DBYD about



Digital disruption may appear intimidating.

the newly installed subterranean fibre-optic cable has resulted in countless undisclosed assets being accidentally excavated. DBYD described the damages as having a "massive" impact on the community and resulting in "business disruptions due to service outages, extended road closures, project delays pending preliminary investigations and remediation, work safety issues, inflated insurance premiums and, ultimately, higher project costs".

While DBYD itself is an invaluable resource, it relies on data being up to date. Contractors must submit new asset locations on time to prevent such incidents. The easier and more streamlined this process, the more up to date the data and the fewer assets at risk.

This may represent an opportunity for the integration of technologies, such as augmented reality, which allow workers to conveniently and immediately update data as soon as an asset is installed. Coupled with existing surveying methods, these technologies represent a powerful tool for more effective utility location and to reduce costly and dangerous incidents.

Disruptive technologies, and more specifically digital disruption, may appear intimidating when first introduced. Yet not all new innovations are inherently destructive to existing players, and more importantly, technological advancements are instrumental in the evolution of the industry.

Those utilities that will continue to succeed into the future will be those that innovate and adapt to new technologies to maximise productivity and reach their potential.

Augview
www.augview.net

tion transposed over a device's live video feed can also update data in the field and upload information in real time.

Like many of the most promising digital innovations in utility asset management, augmented reality may help reduce operational overheads and can be used on already familiar mobile devices. Mobile solutions are becoming more common in utility asset management, as processes involving paperwork or multiple devices are now completed more efficiently.

Digital innovations in locating technologies may be especially significant in the utility sector, where other disruptive innovations (such as the integration of renewable energy into the grid) and the resulting changes in demand mean that many companies are seeking ways to reduce capital expenditure. Despite the need to reduce costs, underground utility location is too vital to neglect.

PRODUCT WATCH



JOB MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Aussie cloud technology firm simPRO Software has launched a streamlined, low-cost job management system for businesses in the field services industry.

The simPRO Service product is a streamlined version of simPRO's industry-standard business management system simPRO Enterprise. The software is targeted at field service businesses like plumbers and electricians and allows them to more easily manage a host of core functions including quoting, job management and invoicing. Many operational and administrative functions that previously required numerous people and mountains of paperwork can now be done easily and seamlessly in the field on a tablet.

While the decade-old simPRO Enterprise system can support businesses doing complex multi-day projects and scheduled maintenance, simPRO Service is designed for firms doing straightforward repairs or simple installations known in Australia as "do-and-charge" jobs, or "time-and-materials" in the US.

simPRO Service includes full stock control scheduling, invoicing, reporting and quoting functions. It is suitable for larger companies with hundreds of technicians, provided they stick with do-and-charge style work.

When a business starts doing larger projects, it can turn on more sophisticated functions such as Projects and Asset Maintenance Planning, without needing to import new data. Staff can maintain the same log-ins and the same access settings.

simPRO also offers an integrated mobility suite for the trade and service industries based around the Connect mobile app, which gives field staff complete control over the administration of individual jobs, including the ability to process payments on-site using a customer's credit card.

simPRO Software
www.simPRO.com.au

VAN SHELVING SYSTEM

Syncro System van shelving offers flexibility and versatility, with a range of options to suit any application. The shelving features a trapezoidal design with a higher rear side to enable easy access and additional loading volume. Syncro shelf trays are manufactured in high-strength steel and are available with aluminium dividers, providing multiple storage options and allowing clear visibility of parts or cargo. Divider shelves include anti-slip mats and an anti-vibration fixation system, ensuring goods don't move around in transit.

Shelving is available with doors that feature a gas spring-assisted hinge system, and with or without

plastic containers. The polypropylene containers have been designed to meet the most common customer requirements and are available in three sizes and two versions, all of which are larger than standard storage bins. The shelf tray design ensures that plastic containers are unable to move in transit, but are easily removed when required.

The system can accommodate storage of most types of equipment, including wire/cable reel storage.

Syncro Vehicle Storage Systems
syncro.net.au

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INTEGRATION POWERS BETTER BUSINESS

Steven Lewis, Fleet Sales Engineer, Forum Group



It's a fascinating time for fleet. In years gone by, we saw a business's fleet being run on pieces of paper, handed across before and after a job. Then we progressed to hands-free communication built in to vehicles, allowing drivers to be in constant communication with the base. However, with software we now see the opportunity to do things differently — to integrate and progress.

Through my eight years in the industry, I've long seen the value of integrated systems that work across the business. Now the technology is here for this to be a reality — we've seen it ourselves at Forum Fleet with the TomTom Telematics systems we're integrating for our business customers.

We are truly at a transition stage where fleet systems need to evolve, and are evolving, to become a business process that adds value.

Fleet systems should no longer work in isolation, collecting information to be studied by the fleet manager at the end of the quarter. By behaving that way, the business is not allowing itself the chance to quickly identify and address inefficiencies based on the information received.

There's a wealth of data that comes through your fleet system that can streamline the workings for the business, including information on

driver habits, safety procedures and journey patterns. The time is now for businesses to implement a system that allows fleet managers to react to information directly, by feeding it through in real time.

The much greater visibility over fleet movement in real time enables businesses to improve the customer experience. They can share more up-to-date information with customers, letting them know when a delivery will be made and addressing the frustration that comes from large and open-ended delivery windows.

But what is next? As fleet software continues to develop, there is a great deal of opportunity for fleet systems to add even more value for businesses.

The next stage of development in software for telematics, as I see it, is to create a software platform that slices and dices the data in a way that's useful for multiple people in the business.

Information on the behaviour of your fleet is useful for all parts of the business, not just the fleet manager. For example, the macro data on job numbers and efficiencies can provide helpful projections for the CFO and CEO, to help support their overall brand positioning and direction.

Software that can analyse data and provide it in an accessible format

can be valuable for many areas of the business.

Beyond this, the next major change we need to see is with hardware. Currently, many advanced fleet systems would have four or five SIM cards in one truck, all costing money to purchase and run. One may be a camera, another a tablet, another a mobile.

Running all of these devices is not only expensive, it can be confusing to have information feeding in from so many different devices at different times. As a piece of hardware, the tablet is a device I can see progressing so that all of these things can be implemented with one device to save businesses money and provide one simple stream of information.

Software, and indeed hardware, has a really key role to play in the progression of fleet management.

It's an area that's moving fast, and it's important to utilise the systems available now and in the future to make the most of the wealth of data provided every day from your fleet. We're now moving towards a system where all data is presented in an appropriate way, to the right person, at the right time, using one device. When this is available, then we'll really see how a fully integrated fleet system can power better business decision-making.

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PRODUCT WATCH

RUGGED TABLET

The Panasonic family of Toughbook enterprise-grade tablets has just expanded with the launch of the Toughpad FZ-B2, said to be the first fully rugged, 7", high-performance, Intel-based Android tablet built for enterprise.

With durability, power and a range of configurability options, the Toughpad FZ-B2 is a suitable tool for field service, inspections, reporting or as an upgrade from clipboards and pen-and-paper processes. Running the Android 4.4 operating system and powered by a quad-core Intel Celeron processor, the product offers enterprise-grade features including a quick-charging, user-replaceable, full-shift battery.

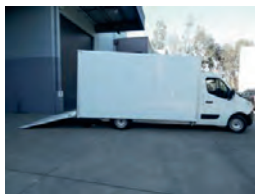
With a fully rugged and sealed design, the thin and lightweight unit is built for long-lasting durability — even when regularly used in harsh environments. The device conforms to MIL-STD-810G and features a 1.5-m drop and all-weather IP65 dust- and water-resistant design.

Software encryption ensures enterprise-grade security. The product comes with a standard 7 h (or optional 14 h) long-life battery, with a hot-swap battery available. It includes a three-year warranty and business-class support.

Panasonic Australia Pty Limited
www.panasonic.com.au



CLOSED LOADING PLATFORM



The CityBox closed loading platform from Motexion is designed to fit the Renault Master platform cab and is suitable for loads that require cooling or heating. Being

wider than the traditional cab chassis and sitting 60 cm above the ground, it makes loading and unloading easier.

The durable design makes it suitable for a range of applications including: catering and food trucks, plant and flower delivery, removalists, linen suppliers, drycleaners, and fire and rescue.

The walls and roof of the CityBox feature a sandwiched construction of reinforced polyester with a polyurethane core, which allows cooling to around 7°C. The inside wall is finished with a gel coat layer, making it easy to clean. A 25 cm curb rib of stainless steel prevents interior damage. CityBox has been extensively tested for durability, is corrosion resistant and comes with a three-year warranty.

Door options include: hydraulic or spring-loaded ramp, double or single back door, roller door or side door. It is available in a range of lengths and heights.

Motexion
www.motexion.com.au

FIELD SERVICE SOFTWARE INTEGRATION

New enhancements to field service management solution Fleetmatics WORK are designed to help businesses operate more efficiently and maximise mobile resources.

The latest release of the product accelerates time to cash for operators by embedding a payment link directly into the emailed invoice generated from within the platform. The online payment feature is powered by Stripe and closes the loop between job completion and payment, as jobs can be invoiced from the field instantly via email and transactions processed securely in real time.

Integration with MYOB Account Right Live means that invoices flow seamlessly from Fleetmatics WORK to the user's accounting system. Updated client information is sent between the two and all data is kept in sync. Business owners now have additional tools to manage field workers, including tags that give dispatchers clear visibility to sort schedules and make assignments based on best fit.

Fleetmatics
www.fleetmatics.com.au



STEPS TO SOFTWARE SELECTION

Purchasing software can mean making big decisions. Depending on the type of system you are seeking, a multitude of products may seem legitimate at first glance, but it pays to evaluate with a critical eye.

Of course it is important to find the best solution, but identifying the right vendor can be easier said than done. There are many avenues to explore including web searches, association references and peer recommendations. While it may seem counterintuitive, starting with a broader set of options may actually help you narrow your search more quickly. It's possible that you'll identify elements you absolutely don't want during a cursory review, which will help you identify the elements that are most important.

It's as much about the provider as it is about the product, and asking the right questions will provide quality information, enabling you to maximise the chance of successful selection and implementation. Try the following as a starting point.

Functionality and technology fit

- Can the vendor handle your functional requirements?
- What industry-specific requirements will be necessary in the future? Can the ven-

dor provide these now, or do they have a future path?

- What third-party add-ons may be necessary?
- What strategic advantages will the software provide?
- What enhancements will be necessary to make it work with your company?
- Will these enhancements take you off the upgrade path?
- Can you leverage current systems and hardware?
- Is your current technology outdated?
- Is your IT group proficient in the offered technologies?
- Can you retrain staff or will you need to hire new skillsets?
- What development tools were used to write the software?
- Will you be able to easily customise?
- Can it be easily integrated with other systems?
- Does the software employ open application program interfaces (APIs)?

Software vendor relationship

- How much information do you have on



the vendor: size, employee numbers, locations, completed projects?

- What are their future plans?
- Is it easy to communicate with the vendor and do you feel the cultures match?
- Will they be a good long-term partner?

Implementation and ongoing service

- What do you know about the value-added reseller (VAR) — size, experience, support ability?
- Maintenance — how will the post-implementation maintenance and billing be handled?
- Support — what are the telephone support hours, is there a callback guarantee and what geographic region is covered?
- Training — is there a training offering?

Collecting information

The right software will not only provide a basic functional fit, it will also give you a strategic advantage and drive operational efficiency, so the information collected to make the choice should be relevant.

The ability to gather relevant information is directly correlated to asking the right questions. For example, don't ask "does this software provide business intelligence and reporting?" but rather, "As a senior manager, I need to stay up to date on project status, view order requests and approvals and review billing information. Is this available from a single source, which I can share with different colleagues, providing different access levels based on their role?" This is likely to provide a vastly different answer, so it pays to be specific.

Narrowing the field

Once you've narrowed it down to a short-list, it's time to check references. While they can be a valuable tool, it's important to understand the true worth of a recommendation. Above all, a good reference will validate that your implementation is possible within the time and cost identified by the vendor. Equally, you shouldn't make decisions based solely on reference recommendations and should have an

understanding of the underlying technology. While your provider doesn't have to be at the bleeding edge of technology, they should be working with something that is both flexible and scalable, ensuring it will not date as you continue to grow.

Integration

Be aware — 'integration' is considered the most overused term and underdelivered aspect of software purchases. Passing an invoice amount to an accounts receivable module in a financial application may be considered integration, but is it? True integration actually creates the invoice, records the receivable transaction and all the data that goes with it, allowing users to see each step of the process in detail. True integration means all processes are woven into the product, not just exchanged between modules. Third-party certification from other vendors usually guarantees that the product's code has been tested and performs as promised.

Show me the money

The demo phase is when the rubber hits the road, but it's also a time to ask the vendor to work for your business. Insist on having the demo work with your data, not a test case, and be sure to test specific functions that are integral to your business. Have all members of your selection committee in attendance and make sure that every question is answered there and then.

Making the commitment

There are three things you'll need to manage here: budget, personnel and expectations, and you need to be realistic about all three.



'integration' is considered the most overused term and underdelivered aspect of software purchases.

Budget

When establishing your budget, be realistic. If you are embarking on an enterprise-wide solution, it's not unheard of to allocate 1-1.5% of revenue for the past three years (provided revenues reflect a typical year). The figure goes up to around 3% including purchase plus implementation. Factor in everything including: software and database licences, hardware, implementation, training, maintenance and other internal costs.

Personnel

This is critical. If you outsource a consultant, be sure they know the game and can bring best practice knowledge with them, rather than sourcing a solution that works with what they know.

If you keep the selection process internal, make sure that committee members understand all aspects of the business. Selectors should interact with the system daily and represent varied parts of the business including operations, finance, service and project management.

Expectations

It is important to be realistic about how and when the system will operate. The selection committee should conduct a needs assessment and get feedback from different functional areas. It will provide a good foundation and avoid pain during implementation. The system probably won't perform 100% out of the box, so choose top areas and list critical points under each.

Large-scale software purchases can bring huge benefit to organisations, but only if the selection and implementation process is well planned. Remember to evaluate the vendor, as well as the functionality, and regard the end product as a key component of your organisation. The right decisions now should deliver well into the future.

WennSoft

www.wennsoft.com.

PRODUCT WATCH

SERVICE BODY

Ridgeback (formerly TSB) has developed a new service body model, the TradieMaster 1800. Based on the Ridgeback Lift-Off product range, the TradieMaster will appeal to tradespeople wanting flexibility with their work vehicle.

The TradieMaster 1800 is an open canopy design allowing for full flexibility in load space for tools and equipment for tradespeople and field service techs. The model is 1800 mm in length and 1750 mm wide, meaning it is suitable for all dual cab ute vehicles that have an alloy or steel tray.

The lift-off service body concept allows for the body to quickly be removed in under 10 min, freeing up the vehicle for other work or recreational tasks. An overall height of 850 mm allows for the vehicle to access most underground car parks.

Tradespeople often like to use their ute for other purposes, but normally service bodies are fixed and full of their tools and equipment. The lift-off concept, open canopy and flat floor mean tradespeople do not have to compromise.

Ridgeback Service Bodies
www.ridgebackbodies.com.au



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DISPARATE VS COMPLETE SYSTEMS

When starting your dream business, growth doesn't happen overnight. It takes a lot of hard work, time and drive to build and sustain a successful business. One of the things many new businesses find difficult, or sometimes do not consider at all, is finding an information system that will support the entire enterprise, both now and into the future.

Many companies initially opt for systems to cater for a specific need or business function, and continue to add new systems to their business as it grows. The result is multiple, disparate systems that are designed to operate on their own. Integrating all the data can be difficult and expensive, and can often cause efficiency issues down the line. Real-time vision of business activity is compromised and uncovering business insights becomes slow and time consuming.

The alternative is to opt for a 'complete' solution that allows organisational data to be housed and managed in a single, central system. These all-in-one systems are designed to manage end-to-end business processes and collect all data from activities across the entire business.

They provide business managers with increased efficiency and organisation, as well

as the ability to monitor business growth. This white paper will look at the benefits of complete systems, as well as explore some of the key problems disparate systems create.

Running multiple disparate systems — what is the real cost?

Data integrity is critical for any business — being able to accurately maintain important company information is essential. Disparate systems make it difficult for businesses to access real-time information and business insights.

Operational efficiency is also impacted with duplicated data entry and management, and data integrity is reduced due to more exposure to human error.

Typically, larger businesses with multiple disparate systems find themselves in a position where they are slower to identify and act on important business information.

Some other disadvantages disparate systems could be bringing to your business include:

- Wasted employee productivity;
- Lack of real-time visibility;
- Integration complexity and cost;
- Higher cost of customer acquisition.

For any business, controlling and containing costs is paramount. Not having the right systems that can scale with your business can inhibit growth as well as profitability.

What is a complete system and how will I benefit?

Complete systems, as opposed to disparate or integrated systems, are solutions that are built within another. There is no need for integration or sharing of data, as all of the information is held and managed centrally.

Complete systems have a number of other benefits that improve business functionality. They include:



Data integrity is critical for any business

- **No data migration required.** Data is automatically carried over to the new system, reducing input time and duplication of work.
- **No re-keying data or maintaining data between two systems required.** With a single system solution, information doesn't need to be maintained across multiple systems as all data is housed centrally.
- **Field service management (FSM) and enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems work seamlessly together.** Investing in one central system means your FSM and ERP systems work seamlessly together, allowing your field service technicians to access your ERP on location.
- **Reduced IT costs.** Complete systems reduce IT costs as you avoid having multiple vendors, maintenance agreements and upgrade costs.

- **Other reduced costs.** A single system solution results in improved employee efficiency and can even lead to a reduction in the number of staff required to maintain and manage the database.

The system in action — Headland Machinery

Headland Machinery has over 60 years' experience in the manufacturing and wholesale distribution industries. The family-owned business has certainly come face to face with the negative impacts disparate systems have on business functionality.

Headland's number one priority is customer service. The company provides services and support throughout the complete lifecycle of their customer's machinery — from sale to operational availability, productivity and usage optimisation, and finally to redeployment once the machine is replaced. With over 25 service technicians assisting customers around Australia, finding a solution that would enable the company to manage and deliver timely, high-quality customer service was of paramount importance.

From 2004 to 2007, Headland tried and tested multiple service management systems, at one stage running three systems simultaneously in order to gain organisational efficiencies. Richard Kloe, managing director of Headland Machinery, said implementing a number of systems caused significant issues to the operations of the business.

"We experienced a number of pain points, such as the duplication of work, additional administration functions, cost of systems management and IT support required," says Kloe.

It wasn't until the company chose to implement NetSuite's cloud-based solution that things began to turn around. Although Headland minimised the number of systems it was using to two, there was still a need to find a system that would assist with field service management (FSM).

The FSM solution at the time worked, but not well enough. The company needed a system that could communicate with its ERP; keep track of customer needs; assist the accounts department, which was struggling to keep ahead of the manual invoicing; and, most importantly, manage the service technicians. This is when the company decided a complete system was essential.

Headland employed the services of a software development team to build a custom solution within the NetSuite architecture. NextService was created to fill the void that other software couldn't fill. This cloud-based solution utilises the NetSuite platform, offering service technicians full access to the company's ERP system, accessing customer details in an instant. Not only did it provide a field service management solution, it also gave Headland Machinery a 360° view of the business.

The NextService software features a scheduler that has enabled service managers to monitor and visually see the progress of each job a technician is at. The software's mobility function allows technicians to be able to finalise invoices with a touch of a button.

This complete system improved productivity and increased efficiency. Headland's ROI was in excess of \$320K in the first year and has allowed the company to grow. The seamless flow between the two solutions enables the company to manage its technicians, increase employee productivity and, all importantly, see the areas of growth within the company.

"NextService delivers Headland's scheduling of maintenance and repair work, project installations [and] breakdown support with increased speed and clarity, ultimately benefiting the customer with greater accuracy, faster response and problem resolution," Kloe says.

KLUGO Group
www.klugogroup.com

LOCAL HERO



The Australian designed and built ACCO range of trucks has been an integral part of the Australian transport industry since its introduction in the 1960s. Engineered to meet local climatic conditions and stand up to some of the harshest driving conditions in the world, the ACCO is produced at the same manufacturing facility in Dandenong, Victoria, where it was born. The iconic truck has become the de facto platform for the vocational market, such as concrete mixers and garbage collection, throughout Australia. The design combines the requirements of high body strength while preserving a light kerb weight, which allows an ACCO to withstand the stresses associated with having a constantly revolving heavy load on its back while assuring the best efficiency for its payload class.

Queensland-based Greycart Pty Ltd is one company that knows the capabilities of the ACCO well. Ross Books, owner and managing director of Greycart, said that his company uses the eight-wheel version of the ACCO with a 7.6 metre agitator on the back to deliver concrete under contract to Boral. Since buying his first ACCO truck in 1986, Books has added to Greycart's fleet and currently has nine ACCOs driven by his 10 full-time drivers.

Books' drivers not only deliver concrete to a wide variety of commercial and domestic construction jobs, but they are also involved in large-scale or unusual jobs. "Our trucks have been loaded onto barges and sailed over to Stradbroke [Island] to a construction site," Books stated. "We've also been to large infrastructure projects with massive 'raft slabs' requiring thousands of cubic metres of concrete to be laid in a single continuous pour."

Concrete is a versatile product, but as soon as the cement and water are mixed, the chemical reaction starts and there are only a few hours in which to deliver the concrete to the site before it starts to harden in the truck and become unworkable. "Because of these time constraints, I need a reliable truck for delivering concrete," Books stated.

Three of Greycart's ACCOs are based in Brisbane and six are on the Gold Coast. The trucks make a large number of relatively short journeys during their working life with the company. "Most deliveries are no more than 10 kilometres, with an occasional job requiring a 100 km round trip," Books said.

"Hauling concrete is harsh on the vehicles as we clean with an acid wash," said Books. "This is not the kindest treatment for a truck, but the ACCOs stand up to it well so we only have to replace vehicles every five to seven years."

Controlling a vehicle with up to a 17-tonne load that is constantly moving requires specialist knowledge and additional driving skills. "As it is rotating, the centre of gravity changes as the mix climbs the side of the bowl," Books said. "The weight is more on the driver's side, so if you make a left-hand turn too quickly, it's possible for the whole truck to topple over." Iveco has introduced Electronic Stability Control (ESC) to the 8x4 ACCO, further enhancing the capability and safety of the vehicle. ESC continuously monitors steering and vehicle direction. When the system detects a probable loss of steering control it asymmetrically applies the brakes to individual wheels.

Every part of its cab-chassis has been manufactured at the Iveco Trucks Australia Dandenong facility. Since its introduction, more than 79,000 ACCO trucks have been driven off the production line. The engine and drivetrain of the ACCO have been designed to meet the emissions requirements of the ADR 80/03 standard. The engine is one of the latest diesel designs featuring a selective catalytic reduction (SCR) system, along with ABS brakes, active traction and the latest cooling system.

Iveco Trucks Australia Ltd
www.iveco.com.au

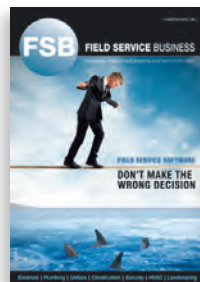
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* Feb 2015 research by Markets and Markets



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FLEET INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS



The Navman Wireless Data Capture Unit (DCU) and Engine Management System (EMS) are designed to provide up-to-date fleet and mobile asset intelligence.

The DCU is fitted to a truck to capture and collate vehicle data from an onboard controller area network vehicle bus network (CANbus). This information is then synchronised with GPS tracking data and sent to a Navman server.

The data can be accessed via Navman's OnlineAVL2 software, which can also be used to generate reports both manually or automatically. When combined with onboard navigation devices, the DCU can be used to alert drivers to engine issues in real time and take corrective action.

The EMS measures negative driving habits, such as harsh breaking or acceleration, and positives such as correct use of gears or cruise control. The system can be used to identify and report on information including fuel consumption, idling time, oil pressure, water temperature and average trip speed.

The EMS can help companies adhere to workplace safety legislation, proactively address engine indicators and establish and monitor acceptable driving and fuel consumption benchmarks.

Due to a partnership with Telstra, users can elect to be billed for the EMS service on their monthly Telstra bills. Navman also has partnerships in place with Google and Microsoft.

Navman Wireless Australia
www.navmanwireless.com.au

MOBILE PAYMENT SOLUTION

Mint Payments Limited has launched Mint mPOS, a new mobile payments solution that converts a smartphone or tablet into an instant wireless EFTPOS machine - providing business owners with fast, simple and painless payments for their services or products.

Mint mPOS accepts all major cards and has tap-and-go technology supporting contactless, chip and PIN based debit and credit card payments, therefore maximising convenience for both merchants and customers.



Mint mPOS can be self-installed; once a business owner receives the Bluetooth NFC card reader and downloads the Mint mPOS iOS or Android app, they are instantly able to take payments, issue SMS or email receipts, add surcharges, do split payments, process tips, search transactions or issue a refund. Mint mPOS also provides small business owners with a faster approval rate to receive a merchant facility without having to go to a bank, instant self-installation and shorter processing times - with next-day settlement for all payments into any Australian bank account.

The device ensures every payment is fully Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant and uses certified bank-grade security, guaranteeing merchants' and customers' cards are safe.

Mint Payments Limited
www.mintpayments.com/mpos

SERVICE BODY



The XL-LSB200 service body is available from Service Bodies Australia, exclusive distributor of the XL Service Bodies range, designed specifically for the Isuzu cab chassis.

The XL-LSB200 is designed for the Isuzu NPR200S and hopes to sway tradies away from overloaded one-tonne utilities. Positioning the body to achieve a low centre of gravity has a number of benefits including: enabling access to all cabinet shelves and ladders from the ground, which reduces injury risk; allowing safer driving and better vehicle handling; optimising visibility; reducing vehicle wear and tear; and increasing fuel efficiency.

The cabinet design provides ample storage space with strong double-skinned doors. The slam shut paddle handles, two-stage rotary locks and full length galvanised hinges assure a secure home for tools and equipment. Optional central locking on all cabinets can be fitted and controlled by the Isuzu key, working in unison with the cab doors.

The all-in-one rear bumper/tow hitch/step and crowbar compartment and recessed shelving on all compartment doors capitalises on usable space, and the rear bumper adds weight over the rear axle to deliver the ideal weight distribution.

XL Service Bodies Pty Ltd
www.xl.com.au



© Yuri Bizgaimer/Dollar Photo Club

ADOPTING APPS ESSENTIAL TO SAFETY

The emergence of new applications for mobile devices is creating a safer environment and benefiting everyone in the chain — from drivers through to fleet managers — across a range of logistics and transport fields.

Take a moment to imagine a truck driver assigned to deliver freight within a city where the streets are clogged, the network hubs are destinations outside of the city’s boundaries and, on any given day, they might be tasked with transporting 100 deliveries or more.

Each delivery has a deadline to meet, all with differing levels of urgency. A breakdown on an arterial road, or a traffic light failing at a busy intersection, makes the driver’s task ever more challenging, raising the pressure in the process. But feeling the pressure is not an option for the driver, because staying safe and alert is the number one priority — especially

when they’re managing multiple tasks with the prospect of long hours ahead.

In these conditions, a driver’s access to reliable and continuous communications is a must. An open line of communication enables the driver to stay constantly connected with the centre of operations so they can report any challenges they face on the road, while their colleagues can monitor their wellbeing wherever they are and headquarters can report any changed conditions that might affect the journey.

The pressure on drivers in the transport and logistics industry is colossal and, given the value of the road freight sector to the national economy, that’s not a



surprise. According to recent research, revenue derived from the sector is estimated at around \$52 billion and growing at a rate of 4.1% per year. It employs about 200,000 people and it's estimated that more than 42,000 businesses rely on the sector. Road freight remains one of the most efficient ways to transport heavy loads, and additional research forecasts that road freight tasks will almost double by 2030.

Yet it remains an unfortunate reality that freight drivers are tasked to undertake one of the most dangerous jobs in Australia. According to the Transport Workers Union, Safe Work Australia has found that truck drivers are 15 times more likely to die than workers in any other profession, while on average, 10 truck drivers are killed on the road each year. Further research indicates that around a third of all work-related road crash fatalities occur within the freight industry.

We ask a lot of our drivers, and the pressure of on-time performance can create considerable risks despite our ever-present focus on drivers' wellbeing.

No one wants timely delivery to come at the cost of safety. So how can we give our drivers all the support they need when they need it, even when they are on the other side of the city from headquarters? How can we help to prevent accidents from occurring, or ensure drivers have access to the vital emergency support they require for those incidents that are unpreventable?

Equipping all of our drivers with the right communications technology is one important way to ensure we are giving our drivers what they need, when they need it. Recent advances in communications technology — especially the emergence of mobile broadband and the ubiquity of digital capabilities — is helping to alleviate some of the burden on drivers without compromising safety or operational outcomes.

Communications devices — including smartphones, digital two-way radios and tablets — are increasing driver safety and productivity, due to the emergence of new applications that benefit logistics companies and many other enterprises.

For one thing, an increasing number of digital two-way radio apps are specifically tailored with the aim of improving safety standards, response times and efficiency. For example, one application can be used to track a driver's speed leveraging the radio's in-built GPS. If a driver is speeding an alert is sent back to headquarters, which can then request the driver to slow down. That same GPS functionality can be used to pinpoint precise locations to ensure driver safety in cases of emergency, while another application can navigate a driver out of gridlock by automatically determining a new route through leveraging both the GPS and mapping functionality of the two-way radio.

New applications are being developed that can also increase operational efficiency, which in turn decreases the pressure on

our drivers — in particular, the emergence of job ticketing applications.

On days when drivers are managing a large number of deliveries, a job ticketing application provides a simple yet effective and efficient way for drivers to send a message back to headquarters after the completion of a delivery. Furthermore, staff at base can create, assign and monitor job tickets through the radio network to deliver routine tasks quickly and effectively. Tickets are sent from headquarters to a driver's digital radio over the network, which can be accepted or declined with the push of a button by the driver.

But part of the challenge in logistics has been communicating effectively and securely across groups of different people, due in large part to the use of incompatible communications systems between operational teams. For example, contracted or temp drivers might rely on a smartphone, while the full-time fleet is equipped with digital radios.

Thankfully, applications that enable smartphones to mirror the capabilities of digital two-way radios are emerging, which can turn virtually any device (including smartphones, tablets and computers) into two-way radios, creating a virtual network of push-to-talk voice communication for workers in any role wherever they may be.

Once the exclusive domain of two-way radios, these solutions work with any combination of broadband networks and devices, allowing for reliable, secure and affordable communications.

The logistics industry, especially the road freight sector, will continue to grow in scale and pressure, and is already a dangerous industry. It is therefore paramount that the workers at the heart of transport operations are equipped with the right tools to increase their safety and efficiency.

Motorola Solutions Australia Pty Ltd
www.motorolasolutions.com.au

PRODUCT WATCH

ENTERPRISE APPLICATIONS SUITE

Global enterprise applications company IFS has launched IFS Applications 9, the new core version of its extended enterprise applications suite.

New to this release are a number of interface changes including IFS Lobby - a fully customisable presentation of the business or situation as it relates to a role or process, which is accessible via a desktop, tablet or smartphone.

Embedded CRM functionality makes business data accessible to the right people at the right time, enabling improved decision-making capability and more targeted customer service.

The layered application architecture includes specialised extension and customisation layers that streamline and drive cost out of modifications to the application, meaning that technical staff can now spend more time adding value rather than administering customisations.

The release features over 500 enhancements and focuses on an improved user experience via visualisation, collaborative tools, user configurability and flexible deployment.

IFS Applications 9 is particularly suited to customers in asset-intensive industries such as mining, oil and gas, building and construction, manufacturing and maritime.

IFS Australia
www.ifsworld.com/au

CRASH ASSISTANCE APP



This is one of those things you wish you didn't need but may save you valuable time if you are unfortunate enough to

require it. CrashAssist, an app from the Australian Accident Repairers Network (AARN) is designed to utilise the existing technology inherent in smartphones, including maps, contacts, clock, calendar, email and camera, to assist in the difficult and stressful time following a car accident.

The app has been structured to ensure the required steps are taken after an accident. The app prompts for information clearly and logically, which can be helpful at such stressful times. If required, emergency service contact is via a simple button push highlighted on the main menu.

All relevant information including accident details, location, vehicle descriptions, contact details of involved parties (including witnesses) and insurance details can be collected directly onto the app and emailed to an insurance company.

Users can nominate their preferred repairer and preload contact details, which can be retrieved easily in the event of an accident. They can also locate an AARN approved repairer if they happen to be away from home. Direct connection to a local towing service is also provided.

It is available for download from Google Play and the iTunes store.

Australian Accident Repair Network
www.aarn.com.au



STYLUS

Adonit has announced the availability of the second-generation Jot Script Evernote edition stylus in Australia and New Zealand.

It is the latest edition to the Adonit stylus range and makes it simpler to take notes on mobile devices with a slimmer build, rechargeable battery, greater precision and improved app integration.

Updates to Adonit Pixel-point technology brings faster stroke tracking, smoother line rendering, and tip to line accuracy on-screen. The streamlined build features an improved grip and fine-tuned Pixelpoint tip, still at just 1.9 mm on the outside, for greater accuracy and compatibility with the best note-taking apps.

The built-in USB rechargeable lithium-ion battery is fully charged in just 45 min for 20 h of writing time. The battery doesn't just recharge but lasts longer and never turns off, resulting in the Jot Script always being connected to the app in use after the initial Bluetooth pairing. Optimised for use with Evernote's Penultimate, Jot Script is also compatible with a variety of other apps including Notability and Good Notes.

Adonit
www.adonit.net.au

TALK FROM THE TOP

When you've got a fleet of vehicles on the road, how do you keep track of your drivers? How do you know that fuel consumption is being kept as low as possible? What about the administrative end? How do you keep a close eye on expenses and employee time sheets and invoices that accumulate? And, finally, how do you track all of these things in real time?

Companies of all sizes, with fleets ranging from just a few vehicles to hundreds of vehicles, are facing the challenges associated with managing their vehicles and streamlining their field operations every day. For example, MSW Planthire, a trench digging specialty company in New South Wales, had poor visibility into its fleet, with no vehicle location data or security system. Routes weren't properly tracked, leading to unnecessary expenditures on overtime and upkeep for vehicles that were being used for employees' personal trips. Pure Plumbing Professionals, also in New South Wales, a company drowning in paperwork, was spending unnecessary time on administrative tasks and compromising customer communications.

Issues like these require solutions that go beyond simple GPS programs and office management tools. More and more, successful serviced-based businesses are turning to cloud technology to mobilise their field service management processes.

Pure Plumbing Professionals implemented Fleetmatics WORK, where information is stored in the cloud, enabling users to automate their back office activities and reduce paperwork. Pure Plumbing immediately saw a positive impact on the business, as accounts became easier to manage with a dashboard that allows managers to see all clients, suppliers, jobs and employees in one place. Likewise, MSW Planthire turned to Fleetmatics REVEAL to improve its processes and increase field visibility in a major way. The solution provided visibility into field activity and actionable insight into driver behaviour and workforce productivity. The system improved the company's routing and dispatching, which decreased payroll discrepancies and also helped decrease vehicle misconduct.

It's clear that field service management solutions can have a tremendous impact on the service-based industry in Australia.

Joseph Boyle is Vice President Sales, Global Field Service Applications, Fleetmatics. He has 15+ years' experience in technology and business consulting with a proven record in start-ups/turnarounds of software/SaaS companies. Currently, he is responsible for global revenue across Fleetmatics' customer base and field service management software.



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